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Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Written statement* submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[21 August 2018]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

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United States of America Leaving the Human Rights Council

Introduction

The United Nations was founded, to achieve three objectives stated in Article 1 of the UN Charter: 1 – maintain international peace and security, 2 - develop friendly relations among nations, and 3 - achieve international cooperation in solving international problems which have humanitarian aspects. Gradually human rights turned into one of the most important challenges in a way that the strengthening of international peace and security is possible under the shadow of the promotion of human rights. Subsequently, the UN Commission on Human Rights began standardisation and creation of principles and drafting of international conventions in order to protect human rights, however, in practice, CHR was could not prevent the extensive and continued violation of human rights in countries. Therefore the in 2006, the Human Rights Council was created by the UN General Assembly to promote and preserve human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

Now, the United States has left the United Nations' Human Rights Council (HRC) for what it calls "institutionalised bias" against Israel. The United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley announcing the United States leaving the Council said that the Council is an organization that does not deserve its name.

Criticising the HRC, THE UNITED STATES Vice-president Mike Pence said: "The Human Rights Council has become a focus of anti-Semitism, an invective against Israel." He also said; "when the so-called Human Rights Council cannot investigate grave human rights violations in Venezuela and Iran, and the Democratic Republic of Congo is accepted as its member, then it loses the value of its name."

When Donald Trump took Office back in January 2017, the United States started its unilateralism in the international society and reduced its cooperation and financial contribution to the United Nations.[1] Last year the Trump Administration in protest to what it called "bias against Israel" came out of UNESCO. Furthermore, the United States has left the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), the Paris Climate Accord, the UN Migration Treaty, the North American Free Trade Agreement to lift tariffs (NAFTA) and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).[2]

Double Standards

Unfortunately, the selective approach and political pressures of world powers including the United States, on the Human Rights Council, closes the way for the preservation of peace, development, friendly relations and international cooperation, all of which are the main objectives of the UN, and complicates the conditions for the investigation and improvement of the human rights situation of various countries.

This is while in some countries, including US allies such as Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, the human rights and fundamental freedoms are in dire straits, however, these countries are left out of America's criticisms.

In view of the challenges that our world face, America not only does not show any cooperation and interaction with the international community, but disheartens the civil society and the people of the world with illegal pressures, double standards as well as leaving international agreements. The United States pushes the world on the brink of various crises, and proves that its' interests have priority over international order and in instances where international mechanisms show the smallest contrast to the United States' interests, the mechanisms are threatened by reducing their budget or the United States withdrawal that can lead to the weakening of international law and its implementation.

The United States is defending the Israel at the expense of undermining the international order while the Palestinian people have been living in military occupation for the past 50 years and the United States decision causes continuation of the occupation and expansion of the pain and suffering of the innocent people of the occupied Palestinian territory. The expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank, occupied East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

Recommendations

1. Being seriously concerned by the international order and Human Rights Council credibility undermined by the United States' decision, the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) calls on the HRC to strengthen its efforts to defend Palestinian's rights and to investigate the clashes on Gaza more forcefully.

1 Deutsche Welte, 20 June 2018
2 Iranian News Agency 20 June 2018

2. While expressing sadness over the United States' decision to leave the Human Rights Council, we recommend HRC to steadily continue on its path to pursue human rights violations of other countries including the Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Bahrain more seriously while preserving neutrality.

3. The Human Rights Council and its members must condemn America's decision to leave the Council and its attempt to put pressure on other member states of the Council.

4. The hostile approach of the United States towards the highest human rights body of the UN takes place while the forced separation of children from the parents of illegal immigrants and their detention in America is a blatant human rights violation. The Council must seriously pursue these violations.